

Learning English with CBC Calgary

Weekly newscast

October 12th 2012

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Objectives of the weekly newscast lesson

- to develop listening skills at the CLB 4 level
- to increase vocabulary among learners
- to increase knowledge of news stories
- to provide a self-study tool, as well as, an ESL classroom resource

**Government
of Alberta** 

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<http://www.cbc.ca/calgary/learning-english/>

News story #1

Before you listen to the first news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily.

Vocabulary - Read the definitions below, and then put the sentences in the correct order. *Answers are in the appendix.*

Words and Definitions
harsh – when something is very negative, cruel and unkind
crisis – a situation or time that is very difficult
recall – an official order to return something to a store or company
processing – to cut, chop or add chemicals to food products to make them ready to eat
facility – a place where one particular activity takes place

1. said The harsh words union the about boss.

The union said harsh words about the boss.

2. bad for crisis e-coli The the for economy. is

3. beef products Hundreds of recalled. were

4. fresh. stays meat it helps Processing

5. processes beef pork. and facility The

Now listen to the first news story from the audio file.

Listening Activity: True/False

Decide whether the statements below are **true** or **false**. Write your answer in the blanks. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. ___ The union blames just the government for the e-coli problems.
2. ___ Workers at the XL plant have reported safety problems before.
3. ___ The union wants a new law to stop workers from reporting the safety problems.
4. ___ The XL plant began processing meat on Tuesday.
5. ___ Meat is now leaving the plant and going to supermarkets.
6. ___ The Premier of Alberta and the union want a public inquiry.

Discussion Question

Do you think it is right to close the meat plant because of contamination? What should happen to the meat that is going bad there?

News story #2

Before you listen to the second news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily.

Vocabulary

Match the words with their definitions. *Answers are in the appendix.*

Answer	Word	Definition
f	1. obscenity	a) showing to the public
	2. activist	b) to take ownership
	3. campaigning	c) to be hurt
	4. publicizing	d) serious, may cause a person to die
	5. nominated	e) an army of fundamentalist Islamists
	6. claimed	f) offensive, causing others stress
	7. wounded	g) a person fighting for a cause
	8. life-threatening	h) to be having problems
	9. Taliban	i) suggested that someone receives something
	10. troubled	j) organize for the promotion of something

Now listen to the second news story from the audio file.

Listening activity: Multiple Choice

Choose the best answer to complete the sentences. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. In Pakistan, a Taliban gunman _____ a 14-year-old girl.	a) shot and wounded b) kidnapped
2. The girl, Malala Yousufzai, was on a bus going _____	a) home from school. b) into the Swat Valley.
3. Malala Yousufzai is well known for _____	a) attacking the Taliban. b) campaigning for girls education.
4. Malala was _____ for the International Children's Peace Prize last year.	a) nominated b) responsible
5. The Taliban said Malala's work _____ was an "obscenity."	a) publicizing Children's Peace b) publicizing Taliban violence
6. Malala was shot twice but the doctor said her wounds were _____	a) not life-threatening. b) life-threatening.

Discussion Question

Why are some people attacked for voicing their point of view? How is free speech protected in Canada?

News story #3

Before you listen to the third news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily.

Vocabulary

Use one of the vocabulary words below to complete the sentences. *Answers are in the appendix.*

teammates	accused	titles (championships)
cyclist (bicycle rider)	evidence	doper (drug user)
blood transfusion	sophisticated (complex)	agency (organization)

1. Lance Armstrong is a famous American _____.
2. Lance won many Tour de France _____.
3. Lance Armstrong has been _____ of being a _____, which is illegal in professional sports.
4. The US anti-doping _____ has been investigating the case.
5. It is important to look at all the _____ before accusing someone of a crime.
6. People who have been seriously injured in an accident may need a _____.
7. It is important to support your _____.
8. There is a _____ computer system at the large company.

Now listen to the third news story from the audio file.

Listening Activity: Short Answer

Read and answer the questions below. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. What does Lance Armstrong want to see?
2. How many people are mentioned accusing Armstrong of being a doper?
3. What evidence is there against Armstrong?
4. What did Armstrong's ex-wife give out to the cyclists?
5. What does the anti-doping agency want to take away from Lance Armstrong?
6. What did Travis Tygart of the USADA say about the doping program Lance is accused of being part of?

Discussion Question

Do you think there is too much pressure on professional athletes to win? How should doping athletes be punished? Should drugs in sport just be allowed as another way to improve performance?

Language Focus

Pronunciation of the Simple Past

We often use the simple past verb tense when we are reporting the news. The simple past is used when the action occurred in the past, but is no longer occurring now.

Verbs are grouped into regular and irregular verbs.

To change regular verbs into the past tense we simply add 'ed.'

There are three different ways to pronounce the 'ed' at the end of regular verbs in the past tense.

Sometimes the 'ed' sounds like a **D**. For example called sounds like **callD**

Sometimes the 'ed' sounds like a **T**. For example worked sounds like **workT**

Sometimes the 'ed' sounds like **Id** For example counted sounds like **count-ted**

So how do you know the correct pronunciation? Follow these simple rules:

Verbs ending in the sounds: **b, g, l, m, n, r, v, w, y, z, and vowels sounds** pronounce past 'ed' as **D**

Verbs ending in the sounds : **sh, ch, x, f, p, k, s, f-** pronounce past 'ed' as **T**

Verbs ending in **t** or **d** sounds - pronounce the past 'ed' as **ID**

Can you hear the different pronunciations of words ending in 'ed'? Listen to the second and third story and write down simple past tense verbs in the correct column. Practice pronouncing the words correctly. Try to add other popular verb s to the lists.

Words ending in the sounds: b, g, l, m, n, r, v, w, y, z, and vowels sounds pronounce 'ed' as D	Words ending in the sounds : sh, ch, x, f, p, k, s, f- pronounce 'ed' as T	Words ending in t or d sounds - pronounce the 'ed' as ID

Transcripts of Weekly news stories

	OCTOBER 12 TH WEEKLY NEWS STORIES	TIME
Introduction	Hi, this is Don Bell. You're listening to Learning English with CBC news for October 12 th .	0:00
Story 1	<p>The union for workers at XL foods meat plant in Brooks had some harsh words about the e-coli crisis this week. The union says blame for the beef recall lies with the government and the company. It says many workers who reported safety problems were fired. Now the union wants a public inquiry into the beef recall. It also wants laws to be changed to allow workers to report problems without the fear of losing their jobs.</p> <p>Meantime, just one day after the union's statement, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency allowed the company to restart production. The plant began processing meat on Thursday but none of the meat is allowed to leave the facility until officials know for sure it's free of e-coli. Alberta premier, Alison Redford, says she will not call a public inquiry but she agrees we need to learn from this experience.</p>	0:10
Story 2	In Pakistan's troubled Swat Valley, a Taliban gunman walked up to a bus taking children home from school on Tuesday, and shot and wounded a 14-year-old activist. Malala Yousufzai is known for campaigning for the education of girls and publicizing Taliban violence. She was nominated last year for the International Children's Peace Prize. The Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack calling Malala's work "obscenity." Malala was shot twice, once in the head and once in the neck, but a doctor said her wounds were not life-threatening.	1:32
Story 3	Lance Armstrong said he wanted to see the names of his accusers. Now the US anti-doping agency has given him 26 names, including 11 of his former teammates. The world's most famous cyclist had also said he wanted to see the hard evidence that he was a doper. The agency gave him that, too. The evidence included about 200 pages filled with details. The details included information about hotel rooms which riders used as temporary blood transfusion centres and Armstrong's then-wife handing out cortisone pills to all the cyclists. Armstrong won seven Tour de France titles. The anti-doping agency has ordered that the titles should be taken away. USADA Chief Executive Travis Tygart said the cyclists were part of "the most sophisticated, professionalized and successful doping program that sport has ever seen." Armstrong did not fight the USADA charges, but insists he never cheated.	2:27

Answer keys

News story 1

Vocabulary

1. The union said harsh words about the boss.
2. The e-coli crisis is bad for the economy.
3. Hundreds of beef products were recalled.
4. Processing fresh meat helps it stay fresh.
5. The facility processes beef and pork.

Listening

1. F The union blames just the government for the e-coli problems.
2. T Workers at the XL plant have reported safety problems before.
3. F The union wants a new law to stop workers from reporting the safety problems.
4. F The XL plant began processing meat on Tuesday.
5. F Meat is now leaving the plant and going to supermarkets.
6. F The Premier of Alberta and the union want a public inquiry.

News story 2

Vocabulary

Answer	Word	Definition
f	1. obscenity	a) showing to the public
g	2. activist	b) to take ownership
J	3. campaigning	c) to be hurt
a	4. publicizing	d) serious, may cause a person to die
i	5. nominated	e) an army of fundamentalist Islamists
b	6. claimed	f) offensive, causing others stress
c	7. wounded	g) a person fighting for a cause
d	8. life-threatening	h) to be having problems
e	9. Taliban	i) suggested that someone receive something
h	10. troubled	j) organize for the promotion of something

Listening

1. In Pakistan, a Taliban gunman _____ a 14-year-old girl.	a) shot and wounded b) kidnapped
2. The girl, Malala Yousufzai, was on a bus going _____	a) home from school. b) into the Swat Valley.
3. Malala Yousufzai is well known for _____	a) attacking the Taliban.

_____	b) campaigning for girls education.
4. Malala was _____ for the International Children's Peace Prize last year.	a) nominated b) responsible
5. The Taliban said Malala's work _____ was an "obscenity."	a) publicizing Children's Peace b) publicizing Taliban violence
6. Malala was shot twice but the doctor said her wounds were _____	a) not life-threatening. b) life-threatening.

News story 3

Vocabulary

1. Lance Armstrong is a famous American cyclist .
2. Lance won many Tour de France titles .
3. Lance Armstrong has been accused of being a doper, which is illegal in professional sports.
4. The US anti-doping agency has been investigating the case.
5. It is important to look at all the evidence before accusing someone of something.
6. People who have been seriously injured in an accident may need a blood transfusion.
7. It is important to support your teammates .
8. There is a sophisticated computer system at the large company.

Listening

1. What does Lance Armstrong want to see? *Lance wants to see the names of his accusers and the hard evidence the anti-doping agency has against him.*
2. How many people are mentioned accusing Armstrong of being a doper? *26 people, including 11 of his former teammates.*
3. What evidence is there against Armstrong? *There is 200 pages filled with detail.*
4. What did Armstrong's ex-wife give out to the cyclists? *His ex-wife gave out cortisone pills to all the cyclists.*
5. What does the anti-doping agency want to take away from Lance Armstrong? *They want to take away his titles.*
6. What did Travis Tygart of the USADA say about the doping program Lance is accused of being part of? *He said the Lance and other cyclists were part of "the most sophisticated, professionalized and successful doping program that sport has ever seen."*

Language Focus

Words ending in the sounds: b, g, l, m, n, r, v, w, y, z, and vowels sounds pronounce 'ed' as D	Words ending in the sounds : sh, ch, x, f, p, k, s, f - pronounce 'ed' as T	Words ending in t or d sounds - pronounce the 'ed' as ID
<p>changed Allowed</p> <p>claimed</p> <p>used ordered</p>	<p>walked</p>	<p>wounded nominated</p> <p>wanted included cheated</p>